

Forward Township Newsletter

June 3, 2021

1. Supervisors Board Meeting: Here is the plan: We plan on having a live face-to-face Supervisors meeting on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 7:00 P.M. in the Municipal Building. Hope to see you there. The Township office will be open to the public on June 15th and thereafter.

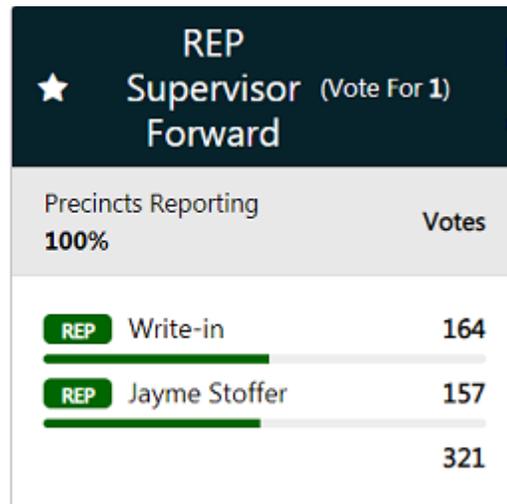
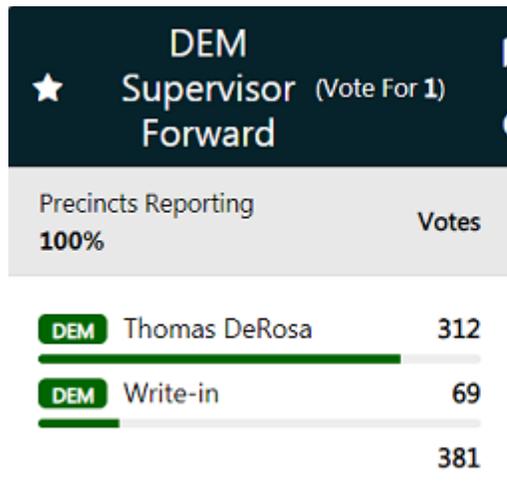
2. Coal Company Meeting: The meeting scheduled for June 24, 2024, wherein representatives of Coronado Coal Company were to make a presentation to the Forward Township Planning Commission, has been cancelled. Coronado advised they were not ready for a meeting. Coronado did indicate they would like to meet with Forward Township representative at some point in the future.

If memory serves me correctly, Coronado has been pushing for a meeting with Forward Township officials for about a year, or so. And, now when it is scheduled, they are not ready. How does that happen? The few people I have talked to about why Coronado might not attend the meeting they have been asking for have all said something like: “Because they (Coronado) did not think they would like the outcome of the meeting.”

3. Congratulations to Tom DeRosa !!!; Based on the following screen shot (immediately below) taken from the Allegheny County Elections Division website on the day after Election Day**, it appeared that:

- Tom DeRosa had won the contest to be the **Democratic** candidate for Supervisor in November, AND
- It **appears** Tom also won the contest on the **Republican** side by getting more “Write-In” votes than candidate Jayme Stoffer received in regular Republican votes!

** The figures on this section (below) of the Allegheny County Elections Division website remained unchanged as of June 3, 2021.



It should be noted (as of June 2nd) that another section of the Elections Division website indicated that of the **164** “Write-In” votes shown (above) on the Republican Ballot, 160 of those votes were for Tom

DeRosa. Since those **160** votes exceed the **157** Republican votes cast for Jayme Stoffer, Tom DeRosa is the Unofficial winner on the Republican Ballot.

Important Sidenote: the Elections Division website indicated the following about the data found on their website: “These preliminary results will become official on Monday, June 7, 2021, unless a petition for recanvass or recount has been filed with the appropriate Court awaiting disposition.” In an article that appear in the Mon Valley Independent Jayme Stoffer is quoted as saying: “*I’m not going to do any type of challenges or recounts,*”

Given that Jayme Stoffer has stated she is **not** going to contest what is now the Unofficial count, Tom DeRosa will be definitely the only name appearing on the November 2, 2021 General Election Ballot. Hard for him to lose that election.

Another view of that contest for the Forward Township Supervisor seat is shown by the following:

Forward Township - Allegheny County			
Forward Township Supervisor			
	Tom DeRosa	Jayme Stoffer	Total
Democrat	381	69	450
	85%	15%	
Republican	164	157	321
	51.09%	48.91%	100%

The schedule immediately above shows that a total of 771 (450 + 321) votes were cast on May 18th. For a year that was not a presidential election year, and there were no federal congressman running, that is a high number of votes. There were 2,066 registered voters at the time of the election. Thus, 37% of the registered voters cast a vote.

Another way to read the above schedule is to combine the votes the two candidates received from both parties: Tom DeRosa received a total of 545 votes (381 + 164) and Jayme received a total of 226 votes (69 + 157).

I do not know how many people realize how *extremely unusual* it is for a candidate to win a spirited “Write-In” election. ***Winning a “Write-In” campaign is so difficult that not many people are even willing to try it!***

Before the Election: I know some politically astute people. And, before the election, not one person that I talked to thought that Tom DeRosa had any chance to win the Republican nomination with “Write-In” votes.

Well, in November, since Tom will be BOTH the Democratic candidate and the Republican candidate, it is obvious he has retained his Supervisor’s position for another

term. I am sure that Tom will continue to do the good job we are accustomed to, and that Forward Township will continue to be well served.

Comments About the “Forward Township” Supervisor Race Seen on Facebook

I am on Facebook, but quite frankly, I don’t check what is on there very often. However, I did look today and saw the following comments relative to the Forward Township Supervisor race:

1. On one of Jayme Stoffer’s Facebook pages I saw the following comment: “Congratulations to Supervisor DeRosa”
2. On one of Tom DeRosa’s Facebook pages I saw a comment of which the following is an excerpt:

“I know this sounds a little crazy. However, if you voted for me I would like to thank you personally. Therefore, I’ll post my phone number (724-344-8082). Call me, I would appreciate it. Your time to vote and your interest means more to me than you will ever know.”

Note: One thing I know for sure: I have known Tom DeRosa since we played Little League baseball: He meant it when he said he would like you to call him.

4. Some Other Races Township Residents Voted On:

Allegheny County Sheriff: Kevin Kraus won the race to become the Allegheny County Sheriff Democratic candidate on the upcoming (November) General Election. Since there was no Republican candidate on the ballot in the Primary Election it looks like Kevin will the Sheriff next year.

As you know, I very much supported Kevin because of his efforts in behalf of Forward Township, so I am happy with that result. Looks like Kevin received almost 2 votes for every vote cast for his opponent. Following are the vote counts in both Forward Township and the County:

Forward Township - Allegheny County				Allegheny County			
Allegheny County Sheriff *				Allegheny County Sheriff - County Totals			
District	Kevin Kraus	Dom Costa	Total	District	Kevin Kraus	Dom Costa	Total
1	24	21	45	Democrat	78,716	75,038	153,754
2	85	43	128		51.2%	48.8%	100%
3	47	23	70				
4	49	30	79				
	205	117	322				
	64%	36%	100%				

Allegheny Council District 9: Another race in the Primary Election that was of interest for Forward Township residents was for Allegheny County Council District 9.

As usual I supported Bob Macey and, as usual, Bob won. Following are the vote counts in both Forward Township and the County:

Forward Township - Allegheny County				Allegheny County			
Allegheny County Council *				Allegheny County Sheriff - County Totals			
District	Bob Macey	S. Singer	Total	District	Bob Macey	Dom Costa	Total
1	26	12	38	Democrat	5,773	4,063	9,836
2	79	37	116		58.7%	41.3%	100%
3	27	27	54				
4	45	26	71				
	177	102	279				
	63%	37%					

Forward Township Tax Collector: Bill Firczak was unopposed and won the Election. Congratulation Bill! I should also probably say Congratulation to Tina Marraccini since she is the person people think of when the “tax collector” is mentioned. Good team there.

5. Pennsylvania Wildlife Booklet: I was in the municipal building signing checks the other day. I noticed a green booklet titled “Wildlife Notes” – probably 120+ pages. It includes an article about each species of wildlife in Pennsylvania. Having been an outdoors enthusiast for years with an interest in wildlife, I picked up a copy. Most interesting. If you have any interest in wildlife stop in at the municipal building and get a copy.

This is a great booklet to have around if you have curious young children. There were only a few copies left. If you stop in to get a booklet and they are all gone, call Senator Jim Brewster’s office at **412-380-2242** – you could also email him at **brewster@pasenate.com**. He provided the booklets and I’m sure he has more.

6. Black Bear Seen in Township: About two months ago one of my neighbors said there might be a Black Bear in the neighborhood. He showed me a picture (on his phone) of some animal feces (also know as “droppings”) that he saw in his backyard. He showed me that picture and a picture of “Black Bear” droppings he had taken from a wildlife website. They looked the same to me, but then again, I am not even close to being an expert.

About two week later, I saw similar “droppings” in my backyard. I didn’t really get too excited because as far as I know those “dropping” could have been from any number of animals. I could not even imagine the possibility of a Black Bear having been in my backyard. Now I can imagine it. The following film is of a Black Bear at a home located about a 40 minute walk from my backyard.

Double-click on the following symbol for a look at the Bear that was seen so close to my backyard. Be aware: this film may take a long time to open.



bear in forward
township.mp4

If for some reason you cannot open the film on your system, either:

- (1) go to the Forward Township Police page on Facebook to see it, or
- (2) send me an email and I will try to help you get to see it.

For more information on how to deal with Black Bears in Pennsylvania go to the Pennsylvania Game Commission and see the following film: [Why Is There A Bear In My Yard? - YouTube](#). You might also go to the website <https://momgoescamping.com/if-you-see-bear/> for some more information. A very good site for information on Black Bears is [Basic Bear Facts - North American Bear Center](#). You can also call the Pennsylvania Game Commission and talk to a wildlife expert - 724-238-9523.

Black Bears are potentially dangerous, but do not overestimate the danger. Depending on which website or source you get your information from, the number of deaths from Black Bears might vary by one or two. The website Bears.org indicate that since 1900 only 61 deaths have been caused by Black Bears in North America.

Some good rules to follow if you see a Black Bear: Do Not Approach the Bear. Do not disturb the Black Bear. Call the police for assistance.

7. Outdated Election Divisions Information: A few years back, Manown Hollow Road had its name changed to Rostosky Ridge Road. I was recently asked by a resident of Rostosky Ridge Road if they should update their home address information in the Elections Division files. The response I gave was as follows:

As far as I know, the law does not REQUIRE a person to update information they provided when they registered to vote. Therefore, there is no penalty for not updating when there are changes. Having said that, you should be aware there may be unwanted consequences when the information you provided when you registered to vote becomes outdated. One example follows:

Example 1: After a period of time the U.S. Post Office does not deliver to an outdated address. When I first registered to vote, my address was R.D. # 3 - Box 312, Monongahela. That address was later changed to 3413 Rainbow Run Road, Monongahela, PA. After a period of time, the Post Office declined to delivered mail to the 3413 Rainbow Run Road.

If I had not advised the Allegheny County Elections Division that my address had changed, after a period of time, they would have had no way to mail me a letter or an announcement.

Example 2: Years ago, the U.S. Post Office would deliver mail to residents of Bunola based on a street address. Although *occasionally*, a Post Office in the Bunola Post Office will forward mail that only had a person's street address, the general rule of thumb there is: only mail that has a Post Office Box number gets delivered.

I am aware of this Bunola situation because I helped to provide the Allegheny County Elections Division with the PO Box numbers of some Bunola residents so the Election Division mail could mail them information – this happened in

connection with the information the Elections Division mailed to residents regarding the (then) new Mail-In-Ballots.

Important: If you are a Bunola resident with a zip code of 15020 you should definitely check your Allegheny County Elections Division information to make sure it includes your Post Office Box number.

Why take a chance of an unwanted consequence? It is so easy to update the information. One of the following methods can be used to accomplish an update of the data the Elections Division has on file for you:

1.. Use VotesPa.com: Go to the VotesPa website. There is a tab titled “How to Update Your Registration”. When you reach the new location click the tab titled “Use the online Registration Forms”. Be careful: This form kind of looks like it might be solely used for a person to register. It is also used to change you address, or other information. Fill it in and you are ready to change your information.

2.. Visit or call the Allegheny County Elections Division: David Voyer, Division Manager, Allegheny County, Elections Division, 542 Forbes Ave., Suite 604, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2953. Call (412) 350-4500. These people are very helpful.

8. “Mail-In Ballot” Mix Up: A number of people who expected to get Mail-In Ballots did not get them, and in some cases that resulted in them not voting! That happened due to a misunderstanding. Some people, when they read the section of the Application for a Mail-In ballot shown below, assumed they would permanently be automatically getting sent a Mail-In ballot just prior to all future election. **That is not true!**

The “Application for a Mail-in Ballot” contains a section titled “Annual mail-in request” – an extract containing that section of the “Application for a Mail-in Ballot” is shown below. Pay careful attention to the **sentence next to the box marked #7 below. It reads: “I would like to receive Mail-In ballots this year AND annual Applications for each year.”** It does not state you are applying to receive a Mail-In ballot each year in the future. It does state (not too clearly) that you would receive an “Application for a Mail-in Ballot” in future years receive.

Annual mail-in request

See “What is an annual mail-in ballot request?” for more information.

7

If you would like to apply to receive mail-in ballots for the remainder of this year and if you would like to automatically receive an annual application for mail-in ballots each year, please indicate below.

I would like to receive mail-in ballots this year and receive annual applications for mail-in ballots each year.

Perhaps a better way to present the message (adjacent to the box) would have been to present that single option into two separate options, such as:

1. I would like to receive a “Mail-In Ballot” for the **current** year.
2. I would like to receive an “Application for a Mail-In Ballot” in all **future** years.

Bottom-Line: If you want to vote using a “Mail-In Ballot” in future years, you must submit an Application in each future year.

Therefore, the rules related to “Mail-In Ballots” and the “Application for a Mail-In Ballot” could be stated as follows:

Once you submit your “Application for a Mail-In Ballot” and it is approved, you will receive your “Mail-In Ballots” in the mail, via the U.S. Postal Service, for the remainder of the **current** year (and through the third Monday in February of the following year).

If, in the “Annual mail-in request” section of the “Application for a Mail-In Ballot”, you checked the box (by the number 7) you are on the annual list. This means you will be sent via the U.S. Postal Service an **APPLICATION** by the first Monday in February of each year to **renew** your annual mail-in ballot **request**.

NOTE: If you should have, but did not, receive your “Application for a Mail-In Ballot” in the U.S. Mail according to this schedule contact the Allegheny County Elections Division: 412-350-4500.

Deadline – November 2021 Election: if you plan to vote by mail-in or absentee ballot in the 2021 MUNICIPAL ELECTION held on **11/02/2021**, your *application* must be received in the county office by 5:00 PM on 10/26/2021. Your voted ballot must be returned by 8:00 PM on 11/02/2021.

Suggestion: If you still have questions after reading this article, give me a call.

9. The State of Forward Township: Now that the Election for Township Supervisor is over and all of the good and bad comments have been made, I want to offer a few **f**actual comments about the Township.

1. Taxes & Garbage: Forward Township has the fourth lowest Real Estate Tax rate of the 130 municipalities in Allegheny County. But, consider the fact that Township residents do **NOT** pay for garbage. When you compare combined cost of Real Estate + garbage Forward Township has, by far, the **absolute lowest** cost-per-residence in all of Allegheny County. I might add: I personally see no reason why the Township would need to raise taxes for, **at the very least, the next 6 or 8 years!**

2. Township Buildings: The Township Municipal Building, Police Department building, and the several Garages the Township owns, are all relatively new and are all in excellent condition. There are no mortgages on any of these buildings. They are all owned by the Township free & clear. They are all well maintained.

3. Equipment: The Road Equipment, with the exception of one piece of equipment that needs to be replaced, is in better shape than it has been for a long time. That one exception, the road grader, will be replaced. The rough cost of the replacement, which is a piece of equipment that does grading, plus a number of other functions, will be about \$73,000.00. The cash to pay for that unit has been set aside – no equipment loan will be needed. We recently purchase a new police car. As usual, no loan was needed.

4. Park: In Gallatin-Sunnyside Park we have one of the finest riverside parks for many miles around. It has a paved walking trail, a soccer field that kids use every week, several pavilions for use by residents, and some of the best access to the river for fishing – you can park 30 feet from the water. And, we are currently pursuing Grants to improve the playground equipment area, obtain better lighting, and a few other things.

5. Audits: Every year the Township is audited by an Independent firm of Certified Public Accountants. That same firm also prepares the DCED report to the State of Pennsylvania. **NO ONE** who has made a request to review those reports has ever been refused!

NOTE: A few years ago a resident complained that the Audit cost (about \$7,000.) could be greatly reduced if we used a group of Township residents to perform the audit. I agree, the cost would be greatly reduced. But, I commented at the time that I would resign if we did not use a qualified independent CPA to certify the Township's financial reports. I might add, no Supervisor spoke in favor of lowering our audit cost by having a Township resident perform the audit.

NOTE: No resident has ever made a request to review either the Certified Audit reports or the DCED and was denied. Not one.

6. Recreation: Although the PA Code does not require, or even suggest, a Second-Class Township (which is the smallest municipality in Pennsylvania) should provide recreational activities, we have the following entertaining events: (1). Community Days Weekend, (2). Halloween Trunk-or-Treat, (3). Children's Christmas Party, and (4). Children's Soccer, etc. etc.

7. Transparency: Like many municipalities residents are provided a number of reports at each Monthly Supervisors' meeting (reports are posted in back of meeting room on the Report Table). They include, but are not limited to: ambulance report, audit report, agenda, etc. And, at the risk of being repetitive, **no one** has every asked for a report and been refused.

And, unlike the residents of most municipalities, the residents of Forward Township have an independent informational source available to them: the "Forward Township Newsletter" available to all residents who request it – there is no charge, all they need to do is ask for it. In the past year the Newsletter and/or Newsletter Supplements included **120+ PAGES** of information about what is happening in Forward Township.

Forward Township, in my opinion, is not perfect, but it has a lot of things in place it can be proud of.

Anyone who has any questions about my comments, give me a call.

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